**General Note:** It is important to note that the *Supplemental Information Supporting Categorical Exclusion Environmental Document* as submitted on 10-8-18 and commented on by Commissioner Strohmaier (Comment ID #s 1-67) has been substantially revised based on MDT comments received on 7-26-2019. Per MDT comments, the *Supplemental Information* document has been revised and renamed the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* (MDT Activity 111). Sections of the *Supplemental Information* have been removed (for text that appeared in other technical documents) or moved to the Categorical Exclusion form or Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation.

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| | ***Supplemental Information Supporting Categorical Exclusion Environmental Document (Draft 10-8-18)*** | | | |
| **1** | Ex. Summary | P. i: "The proposed project is being processed as a Categorical Exclusion, which means the project is being analyzed under a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and for which, therefore, neither an EA nor an Environmental Impact Statement is required (40 CFR 1508.4)." | This seems dubious at best and a stretch of the "bridge replacement" category since the proposed bridge is not merely replacing the existing bridge at its current alignment but for all intents and purposes contemplates constructing a completely new bridge that would likely not be considered for a CE had it been considered as a stand-alone bridge project that did not reroute traffic from the current Maclay Bridge. | FHWA and MDT have confirmed that, based on current knowledge of disclosed impacts and technical analyses completed to date, the proposed project meets the criteria for an action that can be processed as a Categorical Exclusion. (Refer to the audio file from the 02-13-19 meeting in Helena and the written transcript from the 03-12-19 meeting at the Missoula County Courthouse.) |
| **2** | Ex. Summary | P. ii: "The purpose of this report is to provide information supporting the Categorical Exclusion to demonstrate that the proposed action does not result in any significant adverse social, economic, or environmental impacts as defined in 23 CFR 771.117(a)." | However, it seems to be a stretch that the proposed project meets either the spirit or letter of the law pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(d)(3) as it relates to bridge replacement. Moreover, 23 CFR 771.117(b) notes circumstances that might require a higher level of analysis and documentation even if, for the sake of argument, a CE might initially appear warranted. These circumstances include "(1) Significant environmental impacts, (2) Substantial | See response to Comment #1. Unless significant impacts are identified triggering an elevated level of environmental document, which has not occurred to date, a Categorical Exclusion as currently scoped is the appropriate level of environmental document. |

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| | | | controversy on environmental grounds," and "(3) Significant impact on properties protected by section 4(f) of the DOT Act or section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act." Arguably, all of these may be at play in the proposed project and the current CE appears to give these circumstances short shrift. This deserves reconsideration and, in light of that, elevation of this project to an full-blown EIS. | Pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(b), FHWA has authority to determine if a CE is appropriate. FHWA has confirmed that, based on the information reviewed to date, impacts identified as a result of the project do not rise to a level of significance requiring a higher level of environmental document. |
| **3** | Project Background | P. 4: "rehabilitating Maclay Bridge is not eligible for funding under MDT's Off-System Bridge Program because safety objectives would not be met." | Is this true? Is there no room for flexibility here?<br><br>What does the funding package/design exceptions look like for the Swan River Bridge replacement in Big Fork, which replaces the current single-lane bridge for a new one-lane bridge? (See https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/bigforkbridg | Yes, this is true. This is confirmed by the 2013 *Maclay Bridge Planning Study*. Refer to p. 69, Section 7.4. Funding Eligibility that describe provisions found in Title 23 USC § 144(o). MDT will not advance a project and FHWA will not commit federal funding to a project (i.e., rehabilitation of Maclay Bridge) that knowingly requires design exceptions and does not meet current design standards.<br><br>The Bridge St-Bigfork project is being funded through MDT's Off-System Bridge Program. At this point in the design process |

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| | | | e/docs/Feasibility- Report.pdf)<br><br>Has HDR examined off-system bridge program funding across the nation and determined that it is *absolutely impossible* for a state agency to utilize the federal funds in question for a historic bridge rehabilitation?<br><br>Finally, what next administrative steps would be required to change the eligibility of off-system bridge program funds for a Maclay Bridge rehabilitation (e.g., MDT director? Transportation Commission?Governor?). | no design exceptions have been identified. MDT<br>The Swan River bridge replacement project (UPN 9521 STPB 9015(128) Bridge St Bigfork ) will use STPB off-system funds. Construction estimate for the project is $2,600,000. Design exceptions have not been identified at this time. The Bridge Design Standards Manual for off system routes was consulted during the feasibility study for that project. The Manual allows the application of single lane bridges for very low volume roads in certain circumstances.<br><br>I believe this would be a change of project Scope and would require concurrence from MDT, FHWA and the Transportation Commission.<br><br>No, HDR has not reviewed other state's off-system bridge |

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| | | | | programs. That effort is currently beyond the scope of this project. |
| **4** | Project Background | P. 5: "the rehabilitation options resulted in severe disruption to established communities requiring between 5 and 6 residential relocations in order to construct the bridge approaches to meet current design standards." | This is problematic on several fronts.<br>(1) HDR failed to investigate a stand-alone bridge rehabilitation option that would avoid the residential impacts cited,<br><br>(2) residential impacts also accrue to the neighborhood along South Avenue that will be impacted by increased traffic volume, which is a cultural impact that was given virtually no serious consideration; and<br><br>(3) is it absolutely the case that current design standards be met for a rehabilitation project of a historic bridge? | A stand-alone bridge rehabilitation option that avoids the residential impacts would require an option that does not meet MDT's and Missoula County's geometric design standards, which would fail to meet the purpose and need for the project.<br><br>Comment noted. Increased traffic volumes were considered in the analysis and significance determinations—See Section 6.18 in the CE form.<br><br>Bridge rehabilitation projects do not always meet current design standards, and are evaluated on a case by case basis. Rehabilitation is generally intended to improve structural condition, prevent deterioration, or maintain a level of service. Rehabilitation |

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| | | | | of a structure is not always cost effective if the reliability and performance of the structure cannot be improved.<br>Design exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis. The planning study confirmed that MDT would not contribute off-system bridge funds to an alternative that does not address safety and deficient standards, including approaches. |
| **5** | Project Funding | P. 5: "Rehabilitating Maclay Bridge has been determined ineligible for MDT's Off-System Bridge Program because it would not correct the deficient safety features needed to serve the long-term intended use of the facility." | Justification for this conclusion is inadequate—both from the standpoint that the long-term intended use of the facility could not be accommodated by a restored Maclay Bridge and from the standpoint that MDT's Off-System Bridge Program funds could not be used. While a rehabilitated bridge might not meet certain standards for new bridge construction, rehabilitation could address many of the articulated safety concerns regarding weight limits, non-motorized facilities, etc. | Comment noted. MDT and FHWA stand behind the statement that federal funds will not be used for a rehabilitation alternative that does not address safety and deficient standards, including approaches. |
| **6** | Project Funding | | P. 6: Justification for MDT purportedly refusing to contribute off-system bridge funds for a rehabilitated Maclay bridge is inadequate and lacks documentation demonstrating that this is definitively not a possibility. | This was confirmed by MDT at the 02-13-19 meeting in Helena. |
| **7** | Purpose and Need | P. 6: "The purpose of the proposed project is to enhance the operational characteristics, increase safety, and improve | The discussion is less than convincing that this could not be achieved through a rehabbed Maclay Bridge. Moreover, the bullet points that follow as items that the proposed project must achieve are questionable | Section 3, Purpose and Need, has been removed from the *Environmental Engineering* |

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| | | physical conditions of a Bitterroot River crossing for the traveling public over the foreseeable future." | as they relate to rehabilitation of a historic bridge. Arguably, if the same level of effort was put into investigating and designing a robust rehab option as has been put into the South Avenue bridge alignment, we could have a true rehab option that largely accomplishes ["enhanced operational characteristics, increased safety, and improve[d] physical conditions of a Bitterroot River crossing . . . ."] | *Analyses Report* (applies to Comments 7-14).<br>Refer to the *Maclay Bridge Preservation Options Analysis*, January 2019, which describes impacts and other considerations with regards to the rehabilitation options evaluated. Reduced service life should be expected if Maclay Bridge were rehabilitated since many of the existing structure components would be reused. Simply put, it is not possible to achieve the level of improvements that could otherwise be provided by a new structure. |
| **8** | Purpose and Need | P. 7: Bridge Deficiencies. Purportedly "vehicular delays and emergency response times can be negatively affected" by single-lane capacity and speed restrictions. | Is there any documentation that quantifies the delays and assesses the significance of those delays? Are we talking seconds? Minutes? Etc.? | No, this has not been quantified. According to the information contained in the interview between Fire Chief Newman and Chuck Beagle (Feb. 7, 2019), the Missoula Rural Fire Dept has conducted a response time analysis; however, those results have not been made available to HDR. |
| **9** | Purpose and Need | "The proposed project would improve emergency response times by allowing first responders to travel | Is this quantified? If so, provide documentation.<br><br>Also, is this predicated on the current Missoula Rural Fire Station being located at its present location | See response to Comment #8.<br><br>The qualitative statement is applicable to east-west |

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| | | unimpeded from east to west across the Bitterroot River." | (which is not a valid assumption going forward since they are contemplated moving their station).<br><br>Finally, in recent correspondence with the Missoula Rural Fire district, it seems as though the situation is much more nuanced than portrayed. Indeed, some response times for emergency vehicles on the west side of Maclay Bridge would likely increase following removal of Maclay Bridge and other increased response times may be of a de minimis nature relative to truly jeopardizing public safety. | travelling emergency vehicles required to cross in the vicinity of proposed project.<br><br>Comment noted. |
| **10** | Purpose and Need | P. 7: Roadway Deficiencies. "The proposed project is necessary to correct existing safety hazards and roadway deficiencies by constructing a new two-lane bridge and approaches that meet current Missoula County or MDT design standards." | Is this accurate? Must a historic bridge rehabilitation project meet current Missoula County or MDT design standards? And, what is FHWA's position here?<br><br>Given the lack of any serious analysis of a bridge rehabilitation project that looks across the nation at comparable case studies, the report fails to make a case that a creative approach to rehabilitating a one-lane bridge is not possible.<br><br>HDR should clearly outline the steps for granting design exceptions. | Yes, this is accurate. See response to Comment #3.<br><br>Comment noted.<br><br>Refer to the MDT Road Design Manual, Sections 2.9.2 and 2.9.3, for information on the design exception process. https://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/webdata/external/cadd/RDM/50-RDM-COMPLETE.pdf |

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| **11** | Purpose and Need | P. 7: Capacity Deficiencies. "The proposed project is necessary to accommodate existing and projected traffic volumes." | Did HDR consult with Missoula County Community and Planning Services (CAPS) regarding our current land use mapping and planning in the Big Flat/Blue Mountain area? According to my conversations with the former director of Missoula County Community and Planning Services, this may not occurred, which calls into question all of HDR's growth/traffic projections. | The current County growth policy has been consulted. Additionally, CAPS was consulted in the past regarding planned subdivisions in the vicinity.<br>HDR has not been involved in developing any traffic projections; these were developed during the planning study and recently updated by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). |
| **12** | Purpose and Need | P. 8: Non-motorized Facility Deficiencies. "Maclay Bridge has no dedicated bicycle or pedestrian facilities . . . ." | While true enough, the report fails to give due consideration to the possibility that a rehabbed Maclay Bridge could include a cantilevered bike/ped facility that meets this need. And, must AASHTO guidelines (2012) be followed precisely in a case like this such that a 10-foot wide shared-use path is essential (as opposed to a narrower configuration)? Is there more flexibility than the report suggests? | See response under Comment #3. While exceptions can occur, it is MDT's objective to meet standards to provide optimal safety. |
| **13** | Purpose and Need | P. 8: Variations from Local Floodplain Regulations. | This section fails to take into account the possibility that the elevation of a rehabbed Maclay Bridge could be raised. | Section 3, Purpose and Need, has been removed from the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* per MDT comment. Regardless, the P&N is intended to describe current deficiencies with Maclay Bridge, which frames the 'need' for the project. The *Maclay Bridge Preservation Options Analysis* includes considerations |

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| | | | | regarding raising the structure to meet current freeboard requirements. |
| **14** | Purpose and Need | P. 8: Existing Maclay Bridge Site. "Rehabilitation of Maclay Bridge or construction of new bridge in the same location that meets current standards has been determined infeasible due to the existing geometrical road constraints of the approaches and the potential impacts to residential structures requiring the relocation of multiple residences." | This is patently false, since (a) it is unclear that the approaches of a rehabilitated bridge *must* meet current standards and<br><br>(b) the Maclay Bridge Alliance Bridge Rehabilitation Option #1 was not even analyzed in any meaningful way. | See response under Comment #3.<br><br>The scope of the *Maclay Bridge Preservation Options Analysis* was reviewed and approved by Missoula County and MDT prior to amending HDR's contract to conduct the work. Option 1 was rejected in the 2013 planning study, fails to meet the purpose and need for the project, and would not be eligible for receiving federal funds. |
| **15** | Prime Farmland | | P. 13: Is the methodology for assessing agricultural impacts per form NRCS-CPA-106 the only method for assessing prime farmland impacts? It seems like this is an overly wooden approach to assessing prime farmland impacts that does not adequately take into account the incremental loss of prime ag soils in the Missoula valley, in the vein of a death by a thousand cuts. | Yes, this is the current practice per the Farmland Protection Policy Act. Refer to the MDT Environmental Manual Chapter 33 for more information. |
| **16** | Prime Farmland | P. 14: "Additionally, Missoula County is not required to mitigate for indirect impacts to farmland." | What does this mean? | The FPPA set forth criteria for identifying the effects of Federal programs on the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. Locally funded County projects identified in the |

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| | | | | Cumulative Effect section are not subject to FPPA regulation. |
| **17** | Air Quality | Section 6.3.2. P. 14: "Because the proposed project would not result in substantial changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, or other factors that would increase emissions relative to existing conditions, and because the conformity procedures in 40 CFR 93 do not apply, the proposed project would have no meaningful potential MSAT effects." | This seems false. Not only will the proposed project reroute all current Maclay Bridge traffic into an area that is essentially served by a dead-end road, thereby impacting residences in that area, but it is possible that the proposed project may serve as a handy bypass for some percentage of Highway 93 drivers who are wanting to access Reserve Street. | The Air Quality section has been removed from the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* (applies to Comments 17-19).<br>Comment noted. Refer to the completed Initial Site Assessment form (7/26/16) for more information.<br><br>See response to Comment #25 regarding the "bypass effect." |
| **18** | Air Quality | P. 15: "In addition, vehicle emissions would be further reduced by decreasing congestion (and emissions) caused by vehicular traffic delays (i.e., idling vehicles) at the one-lane Maclay Bridge." | Have the delays and emissions been quantified? | Emissions are quantified at a regional scale per the current MPO MOVES model. See the latest Conformity Analysis in Appendix E of the 2017 LRTP for more information. |
| **19** | Air Quality | Section 6.4.2. P. 16: "The proposed project would result in permanent impacts to the riverbed of the Bitterroot River due to installation of the two bridge piers located in the active channel." | While mitigations are offered, the document minimizes the significance of these impacts. | Comment noted. |
| **20** | Floodplains | Section 6.5.2 P. 18: "The preliminary hydraulic analysis has indicated that construction of the proposed project would | Has the analysis taken into account climate change modeling? | Not specifically. The model utilizes a series of discharges that summarize and take into account the history of the |

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| | | have negligible effect on the water surface elevations over existing conditions for the 100-year flood event." | | watershed, which includes runoff from rainfall, snowmelt, and the combination of both. The hydraulic model used is HEC-RAS developed by the Corps of Engineers and is accepted worldwide as a standard of practice when analyzing river hydraulics. |
| **21** | Wetlands | Section 6.6.2. P. 19: "The proposed project is anticipated to have no impact on wetlands." | How can this be stated when the preceding paragraph notes that a thorough wetland field investigation could not occur due to private property owners denying access to portion of the proposed project area? | The Wetlands section has been removed from the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* (applies to Comments 21-22). As described in the CE, based on site characteristics and review of existing databases, the potential for additional wetlands within the project area is low and wetland impacts are not anticipated. |
| **22** | Wetlands | | As such, is LiDAR and aerial imagery adequate to make this assessment? At the very least, it seems premature to make such a flat-footed statement regarding wetland impacts at this juncture. | See response to Comment #21. |
| **23** | Fish and Wildlife | Section 6.8.2. P. 22: "The proposed project **may affect, likely to adversely affect** bull trout; The proposed project **may affect, likely to adversely affect** bull trout critical habitat." | (Emphasis included in original) Given this, is a CE really appropriate? Given potential impacts on fish and wildlife, might it be more appropriate to elevate the analysis to either a full EIS if adverse impacts are anticipated? | The Fish and Wildlife section has been removed from the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report*. See responses to Comments #1 and #2. |

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| | | | What would the next steps be to move in that direction? | Entering into formal consultation with the USFWS does not mean impacts rise to a level of significance requiring a higher level of environmental document.<br><br>FHWA answered this at the Feb. 13, 2019. Refer to the MDT-MCC Project Specific Agreement for more information. Generally, project termination would require: (1) MCC would need to take formal action to cancel the current project (and remove it from the TIP), (2) provide 30-day notice in writing to MDT of the intention to terminate the project, (3) reimburse MDT for any and all costs incurred by the state up to the date of stoppage and, (3) assume financial responsibility to develop the level of environmental document desired by the Commission. |
| **24** | Visual Resources | Section 6.11.2. P. 26: "The construction of the proposed bridge and approaches would result in new, permanent impact on the Bitterroot River as a visual resource." | Given this, is a CE really appropriate? Arguably, this is a significant impact that cannot be mitigated and, hence, should be elevated in NEPA analysis. | See responses to Comments #1 and #2. |

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| **25** | Noise | Section 6.12.2. P. 27: "Operation of the proposed project is predicted to increase traffic noise levels relative to existing condition." | This is likely true, but do the projected noise levels fully take into account the amount of induced traffic that may occur on South Avenue due to use of the route as a Highway 93/Reserve Street bypass? | The Noise section has been removed from the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* (applies to Comments 25-26).<br>The noise model utilized the traffic projections published in the planning study to predict future noise levels.<br>The 2019 Transportation Demand Model (TDM) identified negligible differences in traffic on Buckhouse Bridge (US93/Brooks Street) in 2045 for both the no-build and proposed South Avenue Bridge scenarios. The TDM results imply that with a new South Avenue Bridge, approximately 183 vehicles per day (vpd) may use the new crossing instead of the Buckhouse Bridge crossing. Similarly, negligible change was measured at the Kona Ranch Road Bridge crossing. At this location, approximately 43 vpd may use the new crossing instead of the Kona Ranch Road Bridge crossing. These results indicate the proposed project would not result in a bypass |

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| | | | | effect around the Missoula urban area. |
| **26** | Noise | Section 6.12.3. P. 28: "Increases in traffic noise do not result in a traffic noise impact that triggers consideration of noise abatement." | Perhaps this is so, but the reality is that residents on South Avenue will experience significantly increased noise and, over time, it is likely to be more than the amount of noise currently generated in the vicinity of Maclay Bridge due to possible traffic inducement effect of vehicles using South Avenue as a Highway 93/Reserve Street bypass. | See response to Comment #25. |
| **27** | Land Use, Right-of-Way, and Relocations | Section 6.13.3. P. 29: | There is no mention of the extreme level of controversy surrounding right-of-way acquisition for the project. Regardless of whether such acquisition is conducted in accord with federal statutes, the document fails to address the contentious nature of ROW acquisition in the context of the proposed project (i.e., a South Avenue bridge alignment), which must be taken into account in terms of both the level of NEPA analysis and the ultimate project selected for implementation. | The preliminary design requires right-of-way acquisition from 6 different property owners totaling 5.37 acres. Of the 7 properties, only one parcel (Parcel ID 04219927103390000, a vacant property at the NE corner of Blue Heron Rd and River Pines Rd owned by RIVER PINES ESTATES HOMEOWNERS ASS INC.), exceeds the Programmatic Agreement threshold between FHWA and MDT due to acquisition exceeding one-quarter of the original parcel size. For purposes of the Programmatic Agreement, an acquisition is considered more than minor if it will substantially affect the functionality of the property and/or primary structure on the |

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| | | | | property. None of the acquisitions exceed this criteria. |
| **28** | Cultural and Historic Sites, including Section 4(f) Properties | Section 6.15.1. P. 30: "An archaeological survey on the privately-owned properties affected by the proposed project was not completed due to access restrictions. Once the proposed project right-of-way is acquired by Missoula County prior to construction, the archaeological survey will be completed . . . ." | Again, this begs the question of whether a CE is appropriate given these unknowns and taking into account the contentious nature of the project that will likely make right-of-way acquisition a matter of exerting eminent domain. The document remains silent on these complexities. Rather than continuing to single-mindedly focus on and justify the proposed project as a CE, would it not be more prudent and cautious to simply elevate the project to a full EIS? | See responses to Comments #1 and #2. |
| **29** | Cultural and Historic Sites, including Section 4(f) Properties | P. 31: "The rehabilitation options are therefore not prudent because they compromised the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need, which includes enhancing the operational characteristics, increasing safety, and improving the physical conditions of a Bitterroot River crossing for the traveling public over the foreseeable future." | The document and HDR have failed to demonstrate this and the quoted statement seems patently false given the fact that a true rehabilitation option was not examined, and little if any robust (creative) analysis was conducted on how to enhance the operational features for the existing Maclay Bridge.<br><br>Would HDR be willing to rethink this? | Rehabilitation options were evaluated in the *Maclay Bridge Preservation Options Analysis*. A final version of this report was submitted to MDT in January 2019.<br><br>MDT and FHWA have not identified a need for additional evaluation of the rehabilitation options. HDR will not revisit this unless specifically directed by MDT and/or FHWA. |
| **30** | Cultural and Historic Sites, including | P. 31: "A major rehabilitation that would bring Maclay Bridge up to current design standards would result in severe | This statement raises several questions and seems myopic at best. First, must current design standards be utilized for the rehabilitation of a historic bridge? The report fails to conclusively demonstrate that | See response to Comment #3 and Comment #4. |

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| | Section 4(f) Properties | disruption to established communities because it would result in between 5 and 6 residential relocations in order to construct the bridge approaches to meet current design standards." | operational features of the Maclay Bridge could not be improved during a rehabilitation project. This is a classic strawman argument where the option presented is so unpalatable that no reasonable person would embrace it. Rather, the relocation of 5 or 6 residences is predicated on a rehab option of Maclay Bridge that requires that all current design standards be met. If that assumption is inaccurate, then, indeed, it might be possible to rehabilitate the bridge without the significant residential impacts. | |
| **31** | Cultural and Historic Sites, including Section 4(f) Properties | P. 31: "Moreover, the rehabilitation options are not feasible or prudent because they result in additional costs for right-of-way acquisition and residential relocations of an extraordinary magnitude." | Again, this statement does not reflect analysis of all rehabilitation options and focuses on those that would accord with the arguably erroneous assumption that all current design standards must be met and that it is impossible to grant design exceptions. Is there no flexibility when considering a 4(f) historic property? Without detailed analysis, the above statement is without adequate support and is less than convincing. | Detailed analysis is provided in the *Maclay Bridge Preservation Options Analysis*. Under Section 4(f), FHWA is required to select an alternative that avoids use of a Section 4(f) resource unless it is not "feasible and prudent." FHWA is responsible for evaluating the prudence of the avoidance alternatives discussed in this report. |
| **32** | Cultural and Historic Sites, including Section 4(f) Properties | P. 31: "Due to deteriorating conditions, deficient safety features, and escalating risk of operating the bridge, Missoula County intends to remove the Maclay Bridge as part of the proposed project and construct a new bridge crossing that meets current design standards and removes load restrictions." | This is currently false insofar as the current board of county commissioners has not formally issued a statement on the matter. Perhaps prior commissions were of the mind to remove Maclay Bridge as part of the proposed project, and perhaps this reflects the opinion of Missoula County Public Works, but this position has not been advocated for or memorialized by the current governing body. | This statement accurately reflects the current public record including Resolution #2015-046 and the project specific agreement between Missoula County and MDT. |

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| **33** | Cultural and Historic Sites, including Section 4(f) Properties | P. 32: "The proposed project would have an Adverse Effect to the NRHP- listed Maclay Bridge due to the removal of the historic structure. Missoula County, MDT, and FHWA have concluded that rehabilitation options are not feasible." | This is patently false. The current Missoula Board of County Commissioners have not concluded this. And, it would be completely imprudent in an analysis document like this for either MDT or FHWA to pre-decisionally conclude such a thing. Moreover, due to this significant adverse impact, it is dubious whether staying the course with a CE is the appropriate process to follow. As stated previously, the analyzed rehab options are not the full array of rehab options (and certainly not the rehab option proffered by the Maclay Bridge Alliance), but only a subset. | See response to Comment #32. Both statements are factual: the MT SHPO concurred that removing Maclay Bridge would result in an adverse effect (determination made on Oct. 31, 2016); and the Missoula County Commission confirmed the results of the planning study and voted to pursue replacement of Maclay Bridge with a new bridge on South Avenue on April 18, 2013. |
| **34** | Social and Environmental | 6.16. | This section appears to lack any discussion of the level of controversy in this project and broader community/social impacts on the adjoining neighborhoods. Level of controversy alone is reason to abandon a CE for the proposed project. | Social impacts are discussed in Section 6.18 of the revised CE form. Also, see responses to Comment #1 and #2. |
| **35** | Traffic and Access | | Traffic modeling is questionable to the extent that HDR has apparently not coordinated with Missoula County Community and Planning Services on current growth planning in the Big Flat/Orchard Homes area (December 2018 conversation with Chief Planning Officer Pat O'Herren), which are the neighborhoods that are currently are some of the main users of Maclay Bridge. | The MPO maintains the regional TDM for the Missoula Urban Area. The MPO provided updated traffic projections on 8-23-2019 and the results have been referenced into the appropriate sections of the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report*, the CE form, and the Section 4(f) evaluation. |
| **36** | Traffic and Access | Section 6.17.1. P. 35: "Traffic volumes using Maclay Bridge currently exceed the capacity | Are there no exceptions to this for existing historic structures and/or might there be ways to mitigate wait times and improve flow utilizing signalization of | The single-lane 14-foot-wide bridge does not meet current AASHTO, Missoula County, or MDT standards for width based |

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| | | of the single-lane bridge as recommended by AASHTO." | the bridge, which is something that is not considered by the document.<br><br>In addition, what really are the wait times identified in the report? Arguably, this could also be seen as a natural traffic calming feature of the current bridge.<br><br>Finally, how do traffic volumes on the single-lane Maclay Bridge compare to the single-lane Swan River Bridge in Bigfork, which MDT has approved for replacement with a new single-lane bridge? If traffic volumes are comparable, why would retention of a single-lane Maclay Bridge not be contemplated. In light of the new information relative to Big Fork, how might we reconsider our approach to the current project? | on current and projected traffic volumes.<br><br>Delays and traffic queues were not quantified in the planning study or in recent work by HDR.<br><br>Traffic volumes can be found at the MDT Traffic Data web map, here (http://mdt.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=8a0308abed8846b6b533781e7a96eedd). |
| **37** | Traffic and Access | Section 6.17.2. P. 37: "The proposed project would improve emergency vehicle access and response times to residences located west of the river by removing load limitations on the river crossing and expanding capacity of the bridge crossing to two lanes, thus eliminating potential delay in emergency response times." | Has the been quantified? What are the comparative response times? The above statement does not reflect the fact that Missoula Rural Fire District is contemplating moving its fire station and it does not reflect the possibility that a bridge rehabilitation project could increase the weight bearing capacity of the Maclay Bridge. Is it not the case that some response times might actually grow while others are decreased with a South Avenue Bridge? And, is there evidence that any past responses to emergencies been significantly impeded such that outcomes would have been different had a bridge at South Avenue been in place? | See response to Comment #8. An emergency response time analysis, if available, has not been made available to the project team. It is a logically valid statement that a new bridge providing 2-way travel and removes the speed restriction currently in-place at Maclay Bridge for oversized vehicles would benefit response times west of the Bitterroot River. |
| **38** | Traffic and Access | P. 37: "The proposed project is anticipated to have a negligible | Perhaps, but this is conjectural in that some individuals traveling up Highway 93 might see the | See response to Comment #25 regarding the "bypass effect." |

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| | | effect on travel patterns and accessibility on the west side of the river because the new bridge, similar to Maclay Bridge, would connect to River Pines Road." | new South Avenue Bridge as a convenient bypass around a portion of Hwy 93 and Reserve Street. | |
| **39** | Traffic and Access | Section 6.17.3 P. 38: "To discourage vehicles from driving at increased speeds through this section [of the new South Avenue Bridge], traffic calming measures at either end of the bridge have been proposed to reduce travel speeds." | The irony is not lost in this statement since Maclay Bridge currently provides natural traffic calming by virtue of its design but we'll need to build into the new South Avenue structure traffic calming measures to slow drivers down. | Comment noted. |
| **40** | Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities | Section 6.18.3. P. 39: "Missoula County will fund the improvement [shared-use facility along South Avenue] through its general maintenance fund." | This has yet to be determined based on other county-wide maintenance priorities. It is impossible to make this statement as definitive as stated. Missoula County may elect to fund such improvements, but one governing body cannot bind a future governing body in this manner. | Missoula County Public Works has committed to working with the neighborhoods in the vicinity of the proposed South Avenue Bridge to identify and implement appropriate traffic calming measures and non-motorized improvements along South Avenue between Clements Rd and the proposed bridge, as determined feasible. Additional funding opportunities have been identified and will be explored so that the entirety of the improvements are not solely funded through the road fund. |

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| **41** | Construction Impacts and Mitigation, Floodplain | 6.20 | P. 40: Does any of the hydraulic modeling take into account climate change predictions and modeling? | See response to Comment #20. |
| **42** | Cumulative Effects | Section 7.1. P. 42-43: | The list of plans listed include an outdated version of UFDA and fails to contemplate or include reference to the current land-use mapping project, which will be an amendment to the 2016 Growth Policy. Without this, growth—and, hence, traffic—projects will not be accurate. | See response to Comment #35. Updated traffic projections provided by the MPO in their TDM should include the most current land use planning available. |
| **43** | Cumulative Effects | Section 7.1.3. P. 44: ". . . it is anticipated that the Target Range-Orchard Homes area will continue to see increased residential development as larger parcels are subdivided and developed." | Again, this statement lacks support and is not reflective of the current land-use mapping project. Moreover, it misses the point in that the majority of Maclay Bridge or a new South Avenue Bridge users are likely not residents of Orchard Homes or Target Range but, rather, residents of Big Flat/Blue Mountain areas or those seeking an alternate route to reach Highway 93 south. | This statement is supported by the approved and planned/future subdivisions in the area and is not inconsistent with the Missoula Area Land Use Element as adopted 6/6/2019, which plans for 14,000 additional residents by 2040. See response to Comment #25 regarding the "bypass effect." |
| **44** | Cumulative Effects | Shared-Use Path on South Avenue, P. 45: "Missoula County has committed to using local funds to implement improvements on South Avenue west of Humble Road to include extending the existing shared-use path from Humble Road to the proposed South Avenue Bridge." | Perhaps a prior commission indicated this, but the statement lacks a recognition of how local government works and that one commission cannot bind another commission to allocating budget resources. Any decision on using local funds for such a project will have to come at some unknown point in the future based on how a proposed shared-use path along South Avenue comports with other county-wide transportation infrastructure needs. | This statement has been revised in the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* to note that the current commission has not endorsed this future improvement. |

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| **45** | Cumulative Effects | Spurgin Ranch P. 45: "This subdivision is under review and has not yet been approved." | Actually, the subdivision has been approved so this statement is currently factually incorrect. | This has been revised in the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report*. |
| **46** | Cumulative Impacts | Farmland P. 47: "The proposed project, in addition to past, present, and future projects identified in the project area vicinity, would result in minor losses of prime farmland." | Not entirely accurate. While the amount of farmland/prime soils lost as a part of the proposed action may seem minor, the broader context shows a steady and cumulative loss of this resource. Moreover, the analysis completely lacks any acknowledgement of climate change and how ever smaller tracts of prime soils might play a larger role in community resiliency in the decades to come. See the letter from the Community Food and Agriculture Coalition dated 3/5/19. | Comment noted. See response to Comment #15. The USDA NRCS has approved the proposed project in accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act. The letter from the Community Food and Agriculture Coalition has not been made available to HDR. |
| **47** | Cumulative Impacts | Floodplain P. 47: "The proposed South Avenue Bridge is being designed to meet local floodplain regulations and, in combination with removal of Maclay Bridge, is anticipated to have positive cumulative impact on floodplain function." | Perhaps, but might it be possible, through a creative and state- of-the-art Maclay Bridge rehab project in conjunction with restoration work at site to achieve similar results? | Detailed analysis is provided in the *Maclay Bridge Preservation Options Analysis*. A major rehab would likely require meeting current floodplain regulations, which would result in additional impacts/considerations as identified in the study. |
| **48** | Cumulative Impacts | Threatened and Endangered Species P. 48: "None of the past, present, or future projects occurring in the project area vicinity have been identified to have potential to adversely affect any federally-listed species or its designated critical habitat protected under the ESA." | This seems to contradict other statements ("The proposed project **may affect, likely to adversely affect** bull trout; The proposed project **may affect, likely to adversely affect** bull trout critical habitat." [p. 22]) that indicate that the proposed project does have the likelihood of affecting bull trout critical habitat. At the very least this needs clarification. However, on the fact of it, there appears to be a contradiction here. | This statement is referencing the present and future projects as described in Sec. 5.1.3 (excluding the proposed project) of the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report*, of which none impact bull trout critical habitat. |

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| **49** | Cumulative Impacts | Noise P. 48: | This section minimizes the increase in noise that the neighborhood along South Avenue will likely experience as traffic is shifted to the new alignment and as induced traffic increases might occur as commuters see South Avenue as a convenient bypass for portions of Reserve Street/Brooks/Highway 93. | Noise impacts are discussed in the CE form and the noise report. See response to Comment #25 regarding the "bypass effect." |
| **50** | Cumulative Impacts | Social and Environmental Justice P. 49: | This section completely lacks any meaningful discussion of impacts on community social/neighborhood character. For instance, it states, "Minor cumulative impacts on neighborhood or community cohesion are anticipated due to the proposed project and the recent FMRP development primarily as it relates to localized changes in travel patterns and traffic volumes along South Avenue." This is completely tone-deaf to the level of controversy associated with the proposed action, from multiple cultural and neighborhood character angles. | Comment noted. |
| **51** | Cumulative Impacts | P. 49: "Beneficial cumulative impacts on the social environment are anticipated as it relates to non-motorized improvements and bicycle and pedestrian safety and accessibility." | While the proposed project does include enhanced bike/ped facilities, this does not negate the possibility that an equally creative approach could not be taken with design of a rehabilitated Maclay Bridge to yield the same or similar results. | See response to Comment #3 and #4 regarding rehabilitation of Maclay Bridge. |
| **52** | Cumulative Impacts | Traffic and Access P. 49: | This section fails to recognize that a new South Avenue Bridge may be a convenient bypass for folks either wanting to access FMRP or Reserve Street/western Missoula from Highway 93. | See response to Comment #25 regarding the "bypass effect." |
| **53** | Induced Growth | New Roadway P. 51: "The project does not involve | This statement appears false. To say that extending South Avenue over a new bridge is not a new | The new *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* has |

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| | | construction of a new roadway. Access changes would be minor." | roadway is hard to fathom. Indeed, later in the paragraph the report notes that "0.3 mile[s] of new roadway approaches" and an additional realignment of "0.1 mile of River Pines" Road would be constructed. This is new roadway by any plain language definition, and, to say otherwise is taking an overly wooden approach to what constitutes "new roadway." | been extensively revised, including revisions to this section. See Section 5.2.2 of the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report.* |
| **54** | Induced Growth | Adding Travel Lanes P. 51: "Current and projected traffic volumes on Maclay Bridge substantially exceed the recommended capacity of a one-lane structure." | Is this truly the case when it comes to historic bridge structures and is there no flexibility in the application of AASHTO standards? Moreover, the report fails to provide any analysis of traffic volumes on other one- lane bridges in the United States and how those bridges and model rehabilitation projects have navigated the same sorts of issues. | See response to Comment #3 and #4 regarding rehabilitation of Maclay Bridge. |
| **55** | Induced Growth | New Interchange P. 51: | Yet another contradiction appears in the text when at first it states, "The project does not involve construction of a new interchange/intersection," but goes on to say, "Approximately 620 feet of River Pines Road would be realigned to a new T-intersection tying into the proposed project." | The new *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* has been extensively revised, including revisions to this section. See Section 5.2.2 of the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report.* |
| **56** | Induced Growth | P. 51: | And, while induced growth may not result from the proposed project, induced traffic volume might. | See Section 4.9 of the *Environmental Engineering Analyses report* for discussion of the current traffic projections. |
| **57** | Summary of Impacts | | Above comments are included by reference here and applicable to all of the appropriate categories in the chapter, regardless of whether they are called out below. | Comment noted. |
| **58** | Summary of Impacts | Prime Farmland P. 52: | The NRCS-CPA-106 form may warrant further review, particularly in light of local concern about | Comment noted. See response to Comment #15 and #46. |

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| | | | climate change, community resiliency, and the incremental and real loss of prime agricultural soils. The report seems too quick to dismiss the significance of this impact. See the Community Food and Agriculture Coalition letter of 3/5/19. | |
| **59** | Summary of Impacts | Floodplains Pp. 54-55: | Due to the limited analysis of a Maclay Bridge rehab option and lack of creativity therein, the report fails to demonstrate conclusively that the existing bridge could not be modified and/or raised to mitigate floodplain concerns. | Refer to the *Maclay Bridge Preservation Options Analysis* for a detailed analysis of rehabilitation options. |
| **60** | Summary of Impacts | Fish and Wildlife, including Species of Concern and Special Status Species Pp. 55-56: | The conclusion that there is no significant impact seems to contradict other statements that "The proposed project may affect, likely to adversely . . . bull trout and bull trout habitat." This, in and of itself, ought to call into question whether a CE is appropriate for the proposed project rather than elevation to an EIS with a full array of options. | See response to Comment #23. |
| **61** | Summary of Impacts | Visual Resources P. 59: "Not significant. Roadway and railroad bridges are a common sight and necessity for our transportation system." | This is spurious logic. Regardless of whether such transportation infrastructure is a necessity does not negate significant impacts. There will be significant and enduring visual impacts by placing a new bridge in a new alignment, and, to say otherwise, is simply false. | The CEQ defines "significant" at 40 CFR § 1508.27. FHWA is responsible for determining whether impacts exceed the significance threshold.<br>See response to Comment #2. |
| **62** | Summary of Impacts | Noise P. 59: "Not significant. Increases in traffic noise do not result in a traffic noise impact that triggers mitigation." | This seems dubious from the standpoint that even if for the sake of argument overall noise levels do not change with the South Avenue project (which may not be a valid assumption) the traffic noise is shifted from the Maclay Bridge area to a completely new area along South Avenue. A determination of no significant impact on this point seems incorrect. | See response to Comment #61. |
| **63** | Summary of Impacts | Land Use, Rights-of-Way and Relocations P. 60: | As noted elsewhere, there is considerable controversy with the new alignment and property | See response to Comment #61. |

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| | | | owners over whose land additional right-of- way will need to be acquired (and, likely through eminent domain). To flat-footedly claim that this is not a significant impact is taking too wooden and narrow a perspective on impacts. | |
| **64** | Summary of Impacts | Cultural and Historic Sites, including Section 4(f) P. 61: "Not significant." | This is simply false. The justification provided does not minimize the significance of the impact of the project on cultural resources, even if proposed mitigations are offered. Simply documenting the bridge through HAER is inadequate and ought to be viewed as a option of last choice, which the report has failed to demonstrate is the case. | Comment noted. See response to Comment #61. |
| **65** | Summary of Impacts | Traffic and Access | To the extent that traffic modeling is suspect, the conclusion that there is no significant impact is not cogent. Moreover, the narrative minimizes the impact on traffic on the South Avenue neighborhood, which will see significant increases in traffic volume from what is currently experience. | See response to Comment #56. |
| **66** | Conclusions | P. 69: | In sum, the conclusions are not well founded and may simply be false, since, on several fronts, impacts may be more significant than portrayed in the report. | See response to Comment #61. |
| **67** | Conclusions | P. 69: | Moreover, to the extent that this document was initiated under a previous commission(s), the statement that "the FHWA's concurrence is requested that this proposed project is properly classified as a Categorical Exclusion" may or may not be position taken by the current Missoula Board of County Commissioners (unless this request is unilaterally being made by the Missoula County Public Works | See response to Comment #2. |

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| | | | Department), and should be revisited—particularly in light of the myriad deficiencies identified in the report and associated documentation. | |
| | ***Maclay Bridge Preservation Alternatives Analysis (Draft 8-30-2018)*** | | | |
| **68** | Introduction | Table 1 P. 2: Option 1 ("Rehabilitate the main span Parker through truss with arches for 36 ton load capacity. Replace the pony truss concrete approach spans with a new single span") was not evaluated because "This option does not meet the project purpose and need since it only provides one lane of traffic." | This is not acceptable. The report fails to make a convincing case that this option would (a) not meet the purpose and need, or (b) provide any flexibility that new information or new understandings of existing data might yield a modified purpose and need. To the extent that Option 1 was summarily dismissed is a fatal flaw in this analysis. | See response to Comment #14 (second part). |
| **69** | Conclusions | P. 9: "Retrofit of the existing bridge to meet the project purpose and need does not appear to be a practical option." | Again, this statement lacks support and too quickly dismisses taking a fresh look at a true rehabilitation option (Table 1, Option 1) of the existing Maclay Bridge. | See response to Comment #68. |
| | ***Biological Assessment, South Avenue Bridge Project (Draft 9-13-2018)*** | | | |
| **70** | 1.2 Project Background | P. 1: | Is there a reason why a FONSI was not issued in relation to the 1994 EA? This deserves explanation. Short of that, the 1994 document should not be considered a foundational document since it is over thirty years old and never came to any sort of definitive conclusion. | At this time, it is difficult to definitively answer why a FONSI was not issued. Our understanding is that the earmark the county was pursuing fell through and the effort was shelved. Without a federal funding source, the action would not constitute a federal action triggering the |

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| | | | | need for a federal NEPA decision.<br><br>We would not necessarily characterize the EA as a foundational document, but it is appropriate to acknowledge the existence of the EA and summarize its findings. It is also appropriate to cite that both the planning study and the current NEPA document relied on their own independent analyses in confirming the current conclusions.<br>The 1994 EA document is used to frame the long identified need for the proposed project. Any information or analysis from the EA is understood to be out of date and unusable. |
| **71** | 3.2.4 Potential Impacts on Bull Trout and Bull Trout Critical Habitat | Operation P. 20: "Operation of the bridge would have minimal impacts as the area is already developed and the proposed bridge would replace the existing Maclay Bridge." | This statement is not entirely accurate and somewhat deceptive in that the bridge "replacement" (South Avenue Bridge) is a new bridge in an entirely new alignment at a distance from the current Maclay Bridge. See Clark Fork Coalition comments dated 2/12.19. | Comment noted. The proposed project would replace Maclay Bridge by providing an improved bridge crossing at a suitable location that meets current standards. |
| | ***Montana Department of Transportation Environmental Services Bureau Categorical Exclusion (CE) Documentation, form MDT-ENV-020 (Draft 10-8-2018)*** | | | |

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| **72** | Section 3.c. | "Have the local officials (city and/or county) been consulted on the project?" | While the narrative is accurate insofar as past actions taken or articulated, it is now outdated in that the current commission was not party to any of these prior actions and may have a different perspective on the proposed project. | Comment noted. See response to Comment #32. |
| **73** | Section 6.4 – Biological Resources | | The section accurately notes that there are potential adverse impacts to T&E species. However, because of this, it is dubious whether this project should be considered for a CE rather than either an EA or EIS. | See response to Comment #1 and #2. |
| **74** | 6.10 – Historic and Archaeological Resources | "The adverse effect to Maclay Bridge would be mitigated through the terms and stipulations as specified by MDT's Historic Roads and Bridges Programmatic Agreement." | This is questionable. It has not been demonstrated conclusively that a Maclay Bridge rehab option is not feasible and, as such, mere HAER documentation of the Maclay Bridge is not clearly the only path forward. At the very least, using a CE for a project with a significant adverse effect such as this is a questionable approach. | Comment noted. |
| **75** | 6.12 – Noise | | It seems as though the documentation provided minimizes the adverse effect of noise on those residences along South Avenue that would see a significant increase in traffic from current levels. | Noise impacts are identified and described in the CE form and noise report. |
| **76** | 6.16 – Section 4(f) | | There will be a significant adverse effect on the Maclay Bridge as a result of the proposed action and a CE may not be appropriate in this case. Is there additional 4(f) analysis that will be forthcoming? | Section 4(f) compliance for the adverse effect to Maclay Bridge will be achieved through use of the Nationwide Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation for Historic Bridges. |
| **77** | 6.18 – Social Impacts | | The form incorrectly checks the box that "Due to the nature and scope of the work potential for minor or temporary social impacts are expected." Effects on the neighborhood in the vicinity of South Avenue will likely be significant and permanent. The "not 'significant'' explanation focuses myopically on low | See the expanded discussion on Social Impacts in Section 6.18 of the CE form. |

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| | | | income and minority population impacts, but social impacts are far more expansive than that. | |
| **78** | Part 9 – FHWA Signature Rationale | 9.f. Access | This may not be correct. Indeed, the proposed action does seem to change access control in a manner that will impact traffic patterns. | Refer to Section 6.1 of the CE form. |
| **79** | 9.n. T&E Species | | This should be marked "yes" and not "no." As identified in the Biological Assessment and Supplemental Information report, the potential exists for adverse effects to bull trout. | This has been corrected. The CE form did not accurately automatically update this box based on the "May Affect" button checked in Part 6.4.a. |
| | ***Concluding Questions (3-3-2019)*** | | | |
| **80** | | | In light of the above textual comments and concerns, how might HDR facilitate the process moving forward to accomplish the following? Abandon the current CE approach; | See response to Comment #23 (second part). Also, refer to the BCC meeting minutes from March 12, 2019 for responses to Comments 80-85). |
| **81** | | | Amend the 10/23/14 project specific agreement with MDT to elevate the level of NEPA/MEPA analysis to include at least three options: no build, Maclay Bridge rehabilitation, and South Avenue Bridge. Section 4(a) of this agreement allows for modification and amendment, which would avoid triggering termination of the current project/payback of planning funds and, instead, broaden the scope and array of options for the current project; and | Amending the project specific agreement would be between the County and MDT. FHWA has noted that there is no evidence or data gaps that would support elevating the level of environmental document. |
| **82** | | | Expand the current analysis to an EA or EIS and include a robust Maclay Bridge rehabilitation option based on select design exceptions. HDR's | See response to Comment #2. |

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| | | | existing environmental documentation could be modified and folded into an expanded analysis. | |
| **83** | | | Finally, has HDR fully examined the following?<br><br>the various documents developed by the Maclay Bridge Alliance, including their 11/27/18 "Traffic and Safety Analysis of Maclay Bridge and South Avenue Alternative," and 1/31/19 "Maclay Bridge Briefing Paper"; | HDR has viewed the referenced documents. |
| **84** | | | Other state's bridge rehabilitation programs; and | No, this is beyond the scope of the current project. |
| **85** | | | Bridge rehabilitation documents such as "Best Practices and Lessons Learned on the Preservation and Rehabilitation of Historic Bridges, 7/2012, prepared for AASHTO, or other similar documents. | HDR is aware of this AASHTO publication. |
| | ***Supplemental Information Supporting Categorical Exclusion Environmental Document (Draft 10-8-18) – Additional Comments Added to MDT Comments, received 8-19-2019*** | | | |
| **86** | Sec. 2.3 Project Background | "Furthermore, rehabilitating Maclay Bridge is not eligible for funding under MDT's Off-System Bridge Program because safety objectives would not be met." | I would add, is it truly this black or white? Either safety objectives are met or not? It seems like this falls on a continuum. Please define what the safety objectives are and what the eligibility requirements are for MDT's Off-System Bridge Program. | This language is taken in part from FHWA's responses in the planning study. The primary safety deficiencies of Maclay Bridge have been listed. The essence of this is that safety objectives can be met when projects are designed to meet standards. |
| **87** | Sec. 2.3 Project Background | Text regarding MCC resolution and LAG certification | It may be worth noting in here that this was a prior commission and that the current commission has taken no such action to endorse the current project. | Comment noted. A description of the current commission's stance on the project as well as the steps outlined by FHWA to change the course of the project |

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| | | | | has been provided in Section 2.3 of the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report*. |
| **88** | Sec. 2.3 Project Background | | Again, this reaffirmation was by a prior commission. | See response to Comment #87. |
| **89** | Sec. 2.3 Project Background | | Although LAG certified, it is worth considering whether we want to pursue management of the project or not going forward or let MDT manage the project. | See response to Comment #87. |
| **90** | Sec. 2.3 Project Background | (MDT revised text): "A review of rehabilitation options that meet the proposed project's purpose and need was conducted in 2018 . | Not entirely accurate. One option was summarily dismissed (Option 1) as not meeting the purpose and need and was not evaluated. This strikes at a fundamental aspect of the project, whether the purpose and need is still valid and whether there is opportunity to modify the purpose and need based on new or reevaluated information. | The scope of the *Maclay Bridge Preservation Options Analysis* was reviewed and approved by Missoula County and MDT prior to amending HDR's contract to conduct the work. The analysis is intended, in part, to assist FHWA in making a prudent/feasible determination with regards to Section 4(f). |
| **91** | Sec. 6.5.2 Floodplain Impacts | | Does modeling reflect climate change projections? | See response to Comment #20. |
| **92** | Sec. 7.2. Cumulative Impacts | MDT comment: "FHWA has indicated that we need address secondary and cumulative impacts; like sight distance, traffic, concerns of impacts to South Avenue. Is there a commitment from Missoula County to address this?" | The current commission has not formally made a commitment to address this. | Missoula County Public Works has stated they are committed to working with the neighborhood on identifying potential safety and non-motorized improvements as design progresses and as funding allows. |

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| | ***Montana Division "Nationwide" Programmatic Section 4(F) Evaluation for Historic Bridges – Additional Comments Added to MDT Comments, received 8-19-2019*** | | | |
| **93** | Project Description and Background | "Maclay Bridge has a current AADT of 1,998 and a projected AADT of 5,650 in 2040." MDT Comment: How current or reliable is the projected AADT? | It is essential that HDR coordinate with CAPS on future growth based on recently adopted land use element planning. | The MPO has provided updated traffic projections per the most current TDM. This information is included in Table 4-3 in the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report* and referenced in the CE form and the 4(f) evaluation as appropriate. The TDM should include the most current land use element planning. |
| **94** | Project Description and Background | "The options did not capture the full design requirements necessary to rehabilitate the bridge to meet current standards (i.e. approach roads, flood plain/freeboard requirements, etc.) or consider the impacts to the historic bridge." | This continues to beg the question of whether rehabilitation of historic structures MUST meet current design standards. | According to FHWA and MDT, yes, it does. See response to Comment #3. |
| **95** | Findings, 2. Build on New Location Without Using the Old Bridge | MDT Comment: "We are building a new bridge at a new location, and the only reason we need to have a Use the old bridge is because of section d." | So does this completely undermine what this project is predicated on? Namely, this is a bridge replacement project that qualifies as a CE? It seems like Tom is saying, and I agree with his statement, that what is contemplated is a new bridge at a new location, not a simple bridge replacement. | No, this does not undermine what the project is predicated on. MDT's comment notes that this section is not applicable to the proposed project. The main analysis is in Section d. |
| **96** | Findings, 2.b. | MDT Comment: "We are in fact building a new bridge on a new alignment." | Again, I would argue that it stretches credulity to continue maintaining that the proposed project is a | See responses to Comments #1 and #2. |

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| | | | bridge replacement that qualifies as a CE. This is a new bridge at a new location/alignment. | |
| **97** | Findings, 2.d. | MDT Comment: "This is the most important section. Need to add analysis and discussion to support the factors that went in to making this decision. The information presented here needs to be clear, complete and strong." | And, perhaps worth qualifying all of this that it was a prior Missoula County BCC that elected to take this action. | Comment noted. The current Commission's position on the project is described in the *Environmental Engineering Analyses Report*, but does not influence the 4(f) evaluation. |
| **98** | Findings, 3. Rehabilitation Without Affecting the Historic Integrity of the Bridge | "MDT would not contribute off-system bridge funds to an alternative that does not address safety and deficient standards including approaches." | As noted elsewhere, is this completely black and white or is it possible to improve safety with a rehabilitated structure and enhance safety at approaches and still qualify for use of off-system bridge funds? Quote directly any explicit regulatory or statutory requirements in this regard. | See response to Comment #3. |